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### Clerks Testify On Foreclosure Reform

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**LANSING, Mich --** Ruth Johnson, the Oakland County Clerk/Register of Deeds, and Carmella Sabaugh, the Macomb County Clerk/Register of Deeds, are testifying Thursday before the Michigan Senate Banking Committee in favor of a bill that would help families save their homes from foreclosure.

Senate Bill 1390 would restore the ability of county registers to calculate the amount of money needed to redeem a foreclosed home and provide it to the homeowner.

County registers were allowed to provide that information until the law was changed in 2005.

The bill would prevent lending institutions from charging homeowners an extra charge to lend the money. Homeowners would be able to find out specifically how much money would be needed to get their home back.

"This is unacceptable, particularly for families already in a financial crisis," Johnson said. "The last opportunity they have to save their home should not be stolen from them. Home ownership is too important to the stability of our counties and our state."

"This will help homeowners in Macomb County and I thank Ruth Johnson for taking the lead," said Sabaugh. "We think we can provide this service for homeowners on the Internet or assist them in our office."

Not all county registers would have to provide the information, but it would allow them to if they chose to do so.

"Owning a home is part of the American Dream," Johnson said. "We have to do everything we can to make sure everyone has the opportunity to hold onto that dream."

In Oakland County, there have been as many as 10,000 foreclosures this year. Macomb County is facing more than 6,000 foreclosures.

Wayne County Register of Deeds Bernard Youngblood does not support the bill. He said the bill could open up more litigation against the county clerks if information was not exact.

He also said the amount of time, money and material used would cost the counties too much money.

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